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Lantern Theater Company Presents George Bernard Shaw's *Funny and Scathing Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Sept. 8 – Oct. 9, 2016

*First Professional Philadelphia Staging in a Generation Features
Local Stage Legend Mary Martello in Towering Title Role*

PHILADELPHIA (August 15, 2016) – **Lantern Theater Company** opens its twenty-third season on September 8, 2016 with *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, **George Bernard Shaw's** scathing comedy on social hypocrisy and the excesses of capitalism. Directed by **Kathryn MacMillan** and featuring **Mary Martello** in the title role, the cast also includes **David Bardeen, Andrew Criss, Daniel Fredrick, Claire Inie-Richards, and John Lopes.**

Theater critics and members of the press are invited to attend **opening night on Wednesday, September 14 at 7 p.m.** *A full schedule is included in the fact sheet below.*

George Bernard Shaw's classic comedy remains relevant today with provocative themes that include the plight of the working poor, the struggle women face to get ahead in business, and a young woman's rebellious desire not to follow in her mother's footsteps. Shaw wrote the play in 1893 to "draw attention to the truth that prostitution is not caused by female depravity... but simply by underpaying, undervaluing, and overworking women so shamefully that the poorest of them are forced to resort to prostitution to keep body and soul together." A satire denouncing the hypocrisy of late Victorian Britain, *Mrs. Warren's Profession* is more relevant than ever in our era of increasing economic inequality.

After years away at boarding school, Vivie is finally facing real life. She begins by meeting her mother, whom she hardly knows, the redoubtable Mrs. Warren. Two visions of the world clash: Vivie, a modern young woman, a feminist before her time, demands a certain equality of the sexes and seeks independence by earning a living. To secure a place in Victorian society, Mrs. Warren, an upscale madam, has operated houses of ill repute

across Europe. The conflict that results between mother and daughter and their very different worldviews is compellingly critical of the unequal systems that have limited Mrs. Warren's and Vivie's options for independent lives.

Mrs. Warren's Profession will be directed by Lantern Associate Artistic Director and two-time Barrymore nominee **Kathryn MacMillan**, who has helmed 15 productions at the Lantern, including last season's *Photograph 51* and *Underneath the Lintel*. MacMillan says, "I'm very happy to be working with Mary Martello again in our third production together – particularly on this marvelous script. Shaw wrote with deep integrity, and the resulting work is surprisingly witty, with richly drawn, recognizable characters and challenging arguments."

"Shaw was deeply concerned with social and economic justice, and he sought to improve the lives of people for whom the industrial capitalism of the late Victorian era was an oppressive force," says Lantern Artistic Director **Charles McMahon**. "As a dramatist Shaw set out to change society by artfully calling out the social hypocrisy of the time. With wit and irony he laid bare the flawed thinking of his times and did so in a way that his audience could assume that those being criticized were people other than themselves."

Tickets for *Mrs. Warren's Profession* go on sale today. Tickets are \$24 – \$39 and are available online at www.lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. Student tickets are \$15 in advance; \$10 student rush tickets are available 10 minutes before curtain with valid ID. Discounts are also available for theater industry professionals (\$10 in advance or at the door), seniors 65 and up, groups of 10 or more, and U.S. military personnel. Season subscriptions and flex packages are also available starting at \$95. Lantern Theater Company is located at St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Sts. in Center City Philadelphia.

About George Bernard Shaw

George Bernard Shaw was an Irish playwright, polemicist, and early Socialist whose influence on Western theater, culture, and politics began in the 1880s and has extended beyond his death in 1950. Shaw was the leading dramatist of his generation and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1925. He wrote over 60 plays, including *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1893), his witty and satirical skewering of laissez faire capitalism. Shaw considered it his best play. The British government disagreed, officially banning public performances for more than 30 years after its publication.

Cast and Production Team

Mrs. Warren's Profession marks the return of **Mary Martello** to the Lantern stage, continuing a longtime collaboration that has included powerhouse performances of Sister Aloysius in *Doubt: A Parable* (2015), Mag

Folan in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (2013), and Gertrude in *Hamlet* (2009). Martello's many honors include five Barrymore Awards, 17 Barrymore nominations, and the Lantern's 2016 Luminary Award given in recognition of her significant contributions to the performing arts in Philadelphia.

Claire Inie-Richards will make her Lantern debut in the role of Mrs. Warren's daughter Vivie. Her most recent work includes *Two Gentlemen of Verona* with Shakespeare in Clark Park and *Sense & Sensibility* and *The Cherry Orchard* with People's Light, where she is a resident company member. She is a graduate of The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

David Bardeen (Mr. Praed) makes his eighth appearance on the Lantern stage with *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Previous Lantern credits include the world premiere of *Oscar Wilde: From the Depths* (2016), *The Taming of the Shrew* (2015), *Henry V* (2013), and *New Jerusalem* (2012 and 2011); Bardeen will return to the Lantern later this season in *Coriolanus*. **Daniel Fredrick** (Frank Gardner) previously appeared at the Lantern in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (2015) and as Valentine Coverly in *Arcadia* (2014). **John Lopes'** (Reverend Samuel Gardner) previous Lantern credits include *Richard III* (2006) and *The Taming of the Shrew* (2007). Lantern newcomer **Andrew Criss** rounds out the cast as Sir George Crofts.

The talented design team includes scenic designer **Dirk Durossette**, costume designer **Janus Stefanowicz**, lighting designer **Peter Escalada-Mastick**, sound designer **Christopher Colucci**, and props master **Flora Vassar**.

About Lantern Theater Company

Founded in 1994, Lantern Theater Company is entering its twenty-third season with a record number of subscribers, its largest-ever operating budget at \$1.3M, and a growing community of theater artists engaged in its productions and audience enrichment events. Last season, the Lantern launched the **Lantern Theater Artist Fair Pay Initiative**, a pioneering program to increase the compensation of its contract theater artists by 50% over the prior season. The Lantern seeks to be a vibrant, contributing member of its community, exposing audiences to great theater, inviting participation in dialogue and discussion, engaging audience members on artistic and social issues, and employing theatrical language and techniques to enrich learning in the classroom. Since the inception of the Barrymore Awards for Excellence in Theatre in 1995, the Lantern has received 88 nominations and 19 awards, including the 2009 Excellence in Theatre Education and Community Service Award for its innovative education program, *Illumination*. The Lantern's 2016/17 season continues with *An Iliad*, adapted from Homer by Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare (November 10 – December 11, 2016), *Informed Consent* by Deborah Zoe Lauffer (January 12 – February 12, 2017), *Coriolanus* by William Shakespeare (March 9 – April 16, 2016), and *The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens and Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord* (June 1 – July 2, 2017). More information is online at www.lanterntheater.org.

FACT SHEET

Mrs. Warren's Profession

WRITTEN BY:

George Bernard Shaw

DIRECTED BY:

Kathryn MacMillan

CAST:

David Bardeen as Mr. Praed

Andrew Criss as Sir George Crofts

Daniel Fredrick as Frank Gardner

Claire Inie-Richards as Vivie Warren

John Lopes as Reverend Samuel Gardner

Mary Martello as Mrs. Kitty Warren

PRODUCTION TEAM:

Dirk Durossette, Scenic Designer

Janus Stefanowicz, Costume Designer

Peter Escalada-Mastick, Lighting Designer

Christopher Colucci, Sound Designer

Flora Vassar, Props Master

Rebecca Smith, Stage Manager

Charlotte Northeast, Assistant Director

Meghan Jones, Production Manager

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TICKET INFORMATION:

Online: www.lanterntheater.org

By Phone: (215) 829-0395

In Person: Lantern Box Office, 10th & Ludlow Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19107

TICKET PRICING:

Tickets are \$24 – \$39

Discounts available for students, seniors, military, and groups of 10 or more

PREVIEWS:

Thursday, September 8 at 7 p.m.

Friday, September 9 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, September 10 at 8 p.m.

Sunday, September 11 at 2 p.m.

Tuesday, September 13 at 6:30 p.m.

OPENING:

Wednesday, September 14 at 7 p.m.

REGULAR RUN:

Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. on September 27 and October 4

Wednesday at 2 p.m. on September 21 and 28

Wednesday at 7 p.m. on September 21 and 28, and October 5

Thursday at 7 p.m. on September 15, 22, and 29, and October 6

Friday at 8 p.m. on September 16, 23, 30, and October 7

Saturday at 2 p.m. on September 24 and October 8

Saturday at 8 p.m. on September 17 and 24, and October 1 and 8

Sunday at 2 p.m. on September 18 and 25, and October 2 and 9

CLOSING:

Sunday, October 9 at 2 p.m.

PERFORMANCE VENUE:

St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19107

PARKING/TRANSPORTATION:

Ample parking is available at nearby lots and garages, including The Autopark at Jefferson (10th & Ludlow Sts.) and LAZ Parking (10th & Chestnut Sts.). Metered street parking is available during posted hours. Venue is also accessible by taxi, SEPTA buses and trains, and the PATCO Highspeed line.

ACCESSIBILITY:

Open captioned performance on Friday, September 23 at 8 p.m.

PLAY SYNOPSIS:

Philadelphia legend Mary Martello plays the title role in George Bernard Shaw's scathing comedy on social hypocrisy and the excesses of capitalism. Mrs. Kitty Warren worked her way out of the London slums and now lives abroad, having provided her daughter Vivie with the education and means to grow into a smart, independent young woman of strong convictions. When Mrs. Warren returns, they discover that neither is the woman each thought she knew.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Lantern Pub Night

Lively conversation over a complimentary pub beverage immediately following 8 p.m. performances on Friday, September 16 and 23

Artists in Conversation

Post-show discussions with the artists following 2 p.m. performances on Sunday, September 18; Wednesday, September 21; Sunday, September 25; and Wednesday, September 28